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# **The Anticipation of International Crises: Prospects for Theory and Research**

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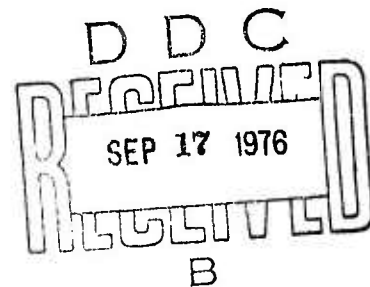
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THE ANTICIPATION OF INTERNATIONAL CRISES:  
PROSPECTS FOR THEORY AND RESEARCH  
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## ABSTRACT

The changing definition of international crisis is noted and related to the three major series of crises in the twentieth century. The rapid adaptation and institutionalization of American foreign and defense policy machinery to fit the crisis conditions of the Cold War era are traced in order to indicate the nature of the dislocation that began to occur in a "transition period" after 1964. The need to restructure and reinstitutionalize concepts and practices in the American foreign affairs establishment according to the requirements of the ongoing transformation of the international system is interpreted with special reference to conceptual reorientations toward crisis phenomena. Fresh opportunities to advance crisis studies in both theory and research under a closer cooperative relationship between the academic and policy communities are outlined.

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## THE ANTICIPATION OF INTERNATIONAL CRISES: PROSPECTS FOR THEORY AND RESEARCH

During the next few years it may be possible to mobilize a global warning system directed to the detection of every kind of seriously endangering situation. Most of the conditions now are right for such a development. Computer technology for large scale information management has advanced by leaps and bounds during the past two decades to make feasible the storage and retrieval of data on a scale not even conceived of as possible in earlier times. Sooner or later, the vast and varied stream of imagery produced by the sensors on the orbiting satellites will be filtered and channeled to produce a public information resource. Stringent security, which for a generation held out of circulation huge amounts of foreign affairs information collected routinely by many U.S. government agencies, has been relaxed recently. The discovery by the government of the interest in sharing as much information as possible with the public as a means of winning support and maintaining confidence should encourage the tendency toward openness. Progress in the social sciences in the invention and utilization of many kinds of social indicators is another favorable development. The widespread enthusiasm for futurism--the movement in support of forecasting and

planning--is also an asset. It is the restructuring of the international political order that appears to be the most potent factor in the situation, however. Because it is likely to stimulate rapid progress toward the institutionalization of global warning facilities, the present transformation of the international system is the central topic of this article.

### THREE INTERNATIONAL CRISIS SERIES

The concept of international crisis has taken on a particular meaning on the occasion of each of the three major military and diplomatic confrontations of this century. Crisis theory is best treated in historical terms with allowances made for shifts of conceptualization from one time period to the next. The first series of crises made an appearance after a long generation of exceptional diplomatic activity marked by much conflict and change in the period 1870 to 1904. It was after 1904 that the political-military alignments of the Great Powers were at last stabilized and that the crisis period began. Frederick Schuman (1948:109) wrote an excellent summary of what happened during the crisis phase:

The two great military coalitions, cemented by common interests and secret treaties, faced one another in a race of armaments and a struggle for

colonial possessions. Each diplomatic conflict--the Franco-German controversies over Morocco of 1904-05, 1908, and 1911, the Austro-Russian disputes in the Balkans of 1908, 1912, and 1913, and many lesser frictions--thus became crises between the alliances. An unstable equilibrium between these immense aggregations of power was maintained for some years, only to break down in a gigantic combat of nation-states in 1914.

After World War I, research on the diplomatic and military origins of the Great War fleshed out the concept of crisis with the observations, (1) that it was the rigidity in the alliance structures of Triple Alliance and Triple Entente that precipitated the series of crises, each of which moved the international system into the intermediate condition between peace and war and (2) that the outbreak of World War I was due in some measure to technical mistakes of statecraft made by several of the Great Powers in the reaction to the crisis of the summer of 1914. In contemporary language, World War I began because of a failure in crisis management.

The second series of international crises appeared between 1935 and 1939. The crisis interpretation of World

War I vintage proved to be of no use in understanding and controlling the confrontations of the Great Powers in the thirties. The behavioral phenomena were about the same--the brink of war episodes met by efforts to find an outcome through accommodation--but the historical context was different. Instead of the crystallized alliance structure and the no-compromise commitments of the pre-World War I period that led to the military showdown, it was the policy of flexibility, negotiation, and conciliation on the part of France and Britain that brought on disaster. Beginning with remilitarization, each aggressive or expansionist move by Hitler was cast in terms of the alternatives of accept and preserve peace or resist and face war. The policy of appeasement, much praised at the time and much maligned later on, was simply an attempt at crisis management in terms of rational problem-solving and accommodation. The lesson about international crises learned from the experience with Hitler was that predatory policies pursued by Great Powers have to be confronted and turned back early if war is to be avoided. Thus, it came to be accepted as fact that a firm policy of opposition by the Western powers in 1935, backed if necessary by military force, would have stopped the Nazi march into World War II. By 1938, it was too late for any war prevention measure through crisis manipulation.



The first two series of experiences with international crises led into general war and, in the historical post mortem examinations, reasons were found to account for the war outcomes. The third instance of an acute international crisis series, extending across time in the period 1948-1964, has had a "successful" result. No general war between the main contenders in the crisis situation occurred and the consequence is that the claim is supportable that the mistakes of the first two series were avoided. It is certain that the memory of the policy of appeasement contributed to the determination to check aggressive international behavior at the earliest possible moment. A reasonable interpretation of the other lesson relating to alliance inflexibility is that the crisis series of the Cold War was maintained so long that multiple "natural" forces eroded the "tight bipolarity" of the early post World War II era. There was, in other words, time provided for the relaxation of the international system structure into a somewhat less dangerous but more complex form.

The foregoing statements about the outcome of the cold war crisis series of the post World War II period should not invite the conclusion that the danger of World War III now is passed. The argument is different; it is being said only that the outbreak of general war now cannot be connected

with the Cold War crisis series. A new conflict configuration could develop in the international system, however--it possibly could be one that pitted the Soviet Union against the United States--and a fourth series of crises could arise. We have no compelling reason to think that the outbreak of general war requires a preceding crisis series. War simply could happen. Nevertheless, as time goes by, Roger Hilsman's (1967:229) observation about the Cuban missile crisis becomes more convincing: "The threat of nuclear war was not eliminated from the world by the events of October 1962, nor was there a reconciliation between East and West. But if either of these two objectives ever is attained, historians may well mark the Cuban missile crisis of 1962 as the beginning." For more than a decade, the world has been in a transition state that puts an ever-widening gap between the current status of the international system and the circumstances when the Berlin Blockade of 1948, the Korean War of 1950, the Suez crisis of 1956, the Lebanon and Quemoy crises of 1958, the Congo crisis of 1960, the Berlin Wall crisis of 1961, and the Cuban missile crisis of 1962 were dominating international history.

To be sure, there have been new crises, conflicts, and periods of high international tension in the years since the Tonkin Gulf crisis failed to develop in the normal Cold War pattern. It has taken much time for observers to comprehend

that the more recent instances of international system disturbance, however dangerous and important they have been, have had different historical contexts and have stimulated different types of responses and behaviors. For a few days in late October of 1973, the U.S.-Soviet confrontation returned sufficiently close to the Cold War pattern to provide a dramatic reminder of how much the times had changed. Since the October war and the oil embargo, the inhibitions against announcing a new age of international relations have been thrust aside. Commentators now report a new orthodox viewpoint; the world has turned to political economy, transnationalism and interdependence have come of age and now dominate affairs, and an international future very different from the past is expected to emerge momentarily.

At first glance, the new task of foreign policy analysis would appear to be that of re-defining and re-explaining the Cold War in terms of what factors were instrumental in putting the U.S.-Soviet confrontation on a historical track to detente and a novel international political configuration. As interesting as that topic is, it has only secondary importance. The problem that deserves the most investigation is the matter of understanding what follows when massive political and physical power structures are standing in opposition but are not allowed to release

their potential in major warfare. This is like asking what would have taken place in history had crisis management succeeded in 1914 and the "needless war" not happened. What international relations would have developed had the dictators been stopped in their tracks by the democracies in the early 1930's? These seem to be only fanciful queries. They raise impractical questions because of the lack of realistic leads to what could have happened in history but they help us grasp the insight that theory and research need to be brought to bear on the present transition period and the near future, given the plain conclusion that World War III did not develop from the crisis series of the Cold War. For the first time we are presented with the prospect of the close of one historical era and the opening of the next without the clearing away through war of existing structures and practices.

#### A TRANSITION THEORY ABOUT THE AMERICAN CRISIS SYSTEM

The origins of the Cold War have been restudied in recent years from a revisionist standpoint. Most of the resulting controversy has centered on the question of who was responsible for starting the conflict. Even if the beginnings are traced back before the Nazi-Soviet Pact of 1939 and to the failure of the alleged attempt to foment a Nazi-Soviet war, the earliest overt signs of the coming of

the Cold War are found only in the last year of World War II. U.S.-Soviet disagreements and friction soon followed in the international conferences, in the administration of the occupation of the defeated countries, and in the specific episodes of clash in Iran, Syria, Greece, and Central Europe. One of the consequences was a drastic revision of American expectations about the postwar world.

In a very short formative period of no more than three years between 1947 and 1950, the basis was laid for the future organization of United States foreign and defense policy. The three-footed wartime structure of diplomacy, intelligence, and defense was carried over and regularized. Patterns of basic concepts and practices of international relations that still prevail were established at that time. The setting up of the American national security machinery was done in a hurry, on an ad hoc basis, without the thought or expectation that it would be the permanent arrangement, and in direct reaction to the perceived Soviet threat. The American establishment was geared at the outset to oppose Soviet expansionism and to meet the stringent conditions of international crisis. Because the institutionalization of policy and practice that followed for a decade was cast in terms of how to cope with the series of crisis episodes of the Cold War era, the whole phenomenon seems to be well described as a crisis response system.

The evolution of the few basic concepts governing the American crisis system was rapid. Most fundamental was a defensive posture based on "the lesson of Munich" and the determination to avoid appeasement. From "containment," the system grew to include the "collective security" arrangements of NATO and other regional commitments and alliances, the "capabilities" test of threats to security, deterrence doctrine, the military balance, military assistance to third world nations, and, finally, competitive diplomacy and the balancing of arms transfers to client nations in secondary conflict arenas. The mere listing of these attributes of the crisis system does not constitute a proper argument, but if the case were set forth fully, it could be shaped to the conclusion that it was the immensely intensive American effort from about 1948 to about 1964, devoted to the waging of crisis but the averting of general war with the Soviet Union, that safely contained the confrontation for a long enough time to allow it to evolve into a form "beyond the Cold War."

The important point to make about the American crisis system seems to be that it became thoroughly institutionalized. Institutionalization allowed the resources and efforts of many governmental agencies to work together when a convergence of effort was most important--in

"the crunch" of a crisis episode. Concepts of correct international behavior were diffused through the governmental system of foreign affairs until they seemed to have the authority and permanence of revealed truth. Standard procedures were devised and followed in the agencies. U. S. international behavior was made consistent and could be depended upon to follow patterns understood by other governments, friends and foes alike. Above all, the Soviet Union, whether or not it actually adopted an operational code complementary to that of the United States, came to understand both American capabilities and intentions. What Henry Kissinger (1976: 144) said would have to be done, was accomplished, in fact, for the crisis occasions of the Cold War relationship:

Issues are too complex and relevant facts too manifold to be dealt with on the basis of personal intuition. An institutionalization of decision-making is an inevitable by-product of the risks of international affairs in the nuclear age.

Beginning in the late fifties, international situations began to appear on the scene that did not fit well with the institutionalization of the American crisis system. The coming of the Sino-Soviet rift was, from an American policy standpoint, a puzzling and complicating development. For

example, it brought uncertainty to calculations of the military balance: what part of Soviet military capabilities should be considered as a defense against China and what part belonged to the military constraint system of U.S.-Soviet relations? More important, the Sino-Soviet antagonism began to complicate affairs in Southern and Southeast Asia. The Vietnam conflict concerned China as well as the Soviet Union. U. S. policy lost leverage whenever and wherever the Soviet Union could not be held responsible for ultimate control over one of the contending parties in local conflicts. Chinese military actions toward Tibet, Indian-Chinese relations, Indian-Pakistani frictions, the French troubles in Algeria, and numbers of lesser incidents in Third World affairs were all situations that did not fit properly with the American institutionalized code of operations. The trickle of these exceptions in the fifties turned into a flood by the middle sixties. Of ten high tension international episodes of the decade 1966-1975, no more than three fitted the Cold War mold. All three belonged to the Cold War crisis pattern because they had the peculiar conflict-collaboration properties of the main series and also because they fell under U.S.-Soviet conflict control at the conclusion of local armed struggles. Further, all three clashes occurred in the Middle East conflict arena, the last of the Cold War sites: the June War of 1967, the Canal War



and the PLO-Jordan struggle of 1970, and the October War of 1973. These cases stand as the best demonstration of some continuity of old affairs and their extension into the new era.

Of the other seven high tension episodes of the decade, three engaged the Soviet Union in dangerous relations with other Communist states: the Czechoslovakia Intervention of 1968, the Sino-Soviet Border Clash of 1969, and the India-Pakistan War of 1971. Three others were strenuous American efforts to get out of the Vietnam struggle, operations that both China and the Soviet Union studiously avoided. (McClelland, 1976) The tenth case was the Cyprus crisis of 1974 that, in the Cold War days, would have been a magnet drawing in both superpower contestants but that, in the actual case, caused no more than a few gestures of involvement and counteraction. Great Britain and the United Nations took the main responsibility for challenging the Turkish act of territorial aggrandizement. The Portuguese revolution of 1974-75, the Angolan power transfer of 1975, and the Lebanon civil war of 1975-76 have been met with international responses even more remote from the Cold War patterns. The conclusions are (1) that crises do not have the meanings and do not create the effects they had in the 1947-64 era, (2) that the international political system has undergone or is still undergoing a major transformation in

its structure of action, and (3) that the United States has been or is in the continuing process of being forced into changes in its ways of processing foreign affairs. The governmental machinery for handling foreign and defense business was installed to meet the requirements of one kind of world. Now, the world has changed and the problem has been and continues to be how to restructure and adapt the machinery to meet the requirements of changed world circumstances.

There is a relevant transition theory that contains two conceptual elements. The first is that there is no realistic course other than to let the already institutionalized practices of diplomacy and defense, specialized as they were to meet Cold War conditions, run their course and gradually fade out of the picture over a fairly long time period. This "withering away" process should be expected to be accompanied by some amount of institutional adaptation or reshaping. "New wine in old bottles" is a possible way to characterize such adaptation. Most of the adjustment to changed conditions and different requirements should be expected to take place through the addition of new programs, new organizations, and new doctrines. This is the second concept of how the transition is to proceed. The anticipation is that there will be little overthrow of the old to make way for the new.

The transition process of adaptation-through-addition may have been illustrated concretely by the Nixon-Kissinger pursuit of diplomatic initiatives. The following interpretation is admittedly speculative and tentative; one hopes the principals will comment on the question in forthcoming writings. It is to be suggested first that "the structure of peace" so frequently mentioned as the goal of the Nixon foreign policy and so regularly interpreted by students of international relations as no more than hyperbole, was meant actually to refer to a longterm aspiration less to change international relations and more to institutionalize new approaches, new resources, and new methods of conducting foreign relations by the U. S. government. The frequent by-passing of the bureaucratic procedures of the Department of State and the Department of Defense, said to have been engineered in Machiavellian style by Dr. Kissinger and his small personal staff, most often has been accounted for as a method of escaping bureaucratic politics and the paralyzing aspects of big government's typical organizational behavior.

It is both conceivable and possible, however, that the foreign affairs establishment was evaluated early by the Administration as having virtually no capabilities to engage usefully in support of the complex of diplomatic actions and

negotiations judged necessary for enterprises such as the opening with China or the building of detente with the Soviet Union. Neither State nor Defense had anything important to offer. This idea is in accord, at least, with the theme that has been advanced here concerning the formative impact and the result of Cold War requirements on the institutionalization of foreign and defense practices of the U. S. government. The ad hoc personalized policy organization at the White House for taking advantage of new conditions in world affairs would then be seen not as a by-passing maneuver but, instead, as a necessary addition to American foreign policy resources. After the initial international objectives had been attained, the work of reorienting and reconstructing the American diplomatic and defense organizations in tune with "the structure of peace" could go forward. Whatever the relevancy of the foregoing speculation, the post Cold War transformation of the international system has manifested itself more and more clearly. One method of tracing the transition is to note what has been happening to the meaning of the key concept of the old system--that of crisis.

#### REDEFINING CRISIS

As we have noted, crisis has had a distinct and special meaning in international relations in the past. The term

referred to an episodic instance in a series of occurrences, it called attention to a particular "system state" between peace and war, and it relied for identification and specification on a definite historical context of international relations. This context changed from historical period to historical period but retained the common attributes already noted. The three experiences of the twentieth century were related, as we have described previously. Now, the meaning of crisis has been diffused, refracted, and extended so that the concept seems to have become obscure. This is an observation that is very easy to verify.

The most fashionable of the current proposals that have to do with the search for new institutional forms and approaches to international politics is that of computer conferencing. It is conceived as a technique to aid decision-making and as a means of "crisis" control or avoidance. The idea of conferencing is simple; in addition to direct communication between the parties involved in an emergency affair, the computer feature in the network arrangement makes it possible to retain and display not merely the previous events of the conferencing, but also varying and controlled amounts of additional information pertaining to the situation. An important programmatic statement on the potential of computer conferencing was

published in the pages of SCIENCE early in 1975. That article began with this identification of crisis in the current historical context: "Many alarming trends of our present culture share common roots. Worldwide inflation, worldwide resource shortages, extensive famine, and the inexorable quest for more deadly weapons may very well reach crisis proportions if these trends continue." (Kupperman et. al., 1975: 404). The outlook on crisis that is reflected in the statement is a far cry from the kinds of crisis we have been considering to this point. That is the case unless some theoretical connections that join the "trends" and Great Power political relations are established. The authors, who are responsible members from the academic and policy communities, do not venture much further into the question of what a crisis is, however. They (Kupperman, Wilcox, and Smith, 1975: 404) propose a relativistic psychological identification:

In a sense, crises are unto the beholder. What is a crisis to one individual or group may not be to another. However, crises are generally distinguished from routine situations by a sense of urgency and a concern that problems will become worse in the absence of action. Vulnerability to the effects of crises lie in the inability to manage available resources in a way that will

alleviate the perceived problems tolerably. ...

Crises may arise from natural causes or may be induced by human adversaries, and the nature of the management required in response differs accordingly. Thus the actions required to limit physical damage from a severe hurricane and to expedite recovery from it differ substantially from the tactics needed to minimize the economic effects of a major transportation strike and to moderate the conditions which caused it.

It does not do any good to deplore the lack of a theory that would establish, once and for all, what a crisis is to be taken to be. It probably is fruitless to try to find some universal definition that will contain every crisis case within the bounds of a stated set of attributes or relationships. Concepts and their references change with time; at present, a crisis has become simply an emergency situation that is responded to according to a perception of danger and an urge to act against that danger. Elsewhere, it has been proposed at some length that threat recognition and response to threat now make better objects for theory development than crisis, itself (McClelland, 1975a).

The approach through threat conceptualizations has the great advantage of facilitating explanations of how new

crisis meanings relate to foreign policy and, especially, to requirements for a reconstituted American foreign policy. Thus, it can be pointed out that in the Cold War era, the sole threat of great importance was the Soviet menace of direct and indirect aggression and that the most important U. S. foreign policy requirement was the ability to contain or prevent expansionism by the Soviet Union through calculated displays of military might. This is to say that the deterrence mechanism was once the principal means of meeting threat. The problems of intelligence were then to obtain reliable data on Soviet capabilities and, to a lesser extent, on Soviet intentions. Now, in the post Cold War era, there are new circumstances in the world environment to consider. There are new kinds of threats to be taken into account. They come from different places and can involve many parties. They assume forms that sometimes are military but many times are not. One of the functions of foreign policy is to provide a defense against serious threats from abroad (McClelland, 1975b). Defense defined in terms of the new shape of world affairs still includes the military concern but defense also needs an addition so that there exist a readiness and capability to deal with dangerous situations that have no connection with soldiers, weapons, or warfare. Being prepared to cope with emergency conditions that appear as crises becomes a significant organizational



goal of the foreign affairs establishment. Diplomacy and defense need to be brought into a much closer working relationship than hitherto in the days of the Cold War but it is intelligence that faces the greatest challenge of change and adjustment because of the increased severity of the requirements for information and analysis.

If the lesson of the crisis series that led into World War II was to act early and avoid appeasement, the lesson of the Cold War may well be to not let relationships between nations degrade into an impacted state where repeated confrontations will occur. The guiding idea around which a new foreign policy institutionalization could grow would be to mobilize talents and energies for the tasks of crisis avoidance and crisis prevention. Having worked our way past the Cold War, we do not want to see conditions develop that would bring about its recurrence. Further, it is to be argued that the United States, as a still rich and powerful status quo country, has a longterm interest in reducing threat, tension, and trouble everywhere in the international environment.

The new information requirement is that there be established and maintained a global scanning for danger signs and trouble in every country and for indications of tension, destruction, and violence in the relations between

nations. This is the threat recognition task. Inside the government, Indications and Warnings describe the function; we refer to an I & W requirement that would not be limited to military activity but would extend across political territory and into reaches as farflung as inflation, resource shortages, and famine. The United States government has long since developed a superb global data acquisition capacity. It needs only to be extended and directed to fit the general warning system requirement more exactly. Most of the reasons for maintaining security over the current data flow of intelligence evaporated with the decline of the Cold War. There should be little difficulty in providing protection for the few sensitive sources of information abroad even if the entire U. S. current intelligence stream were made open and publicly available. It is the secrecy concept, itself, that needs further de-institutionalizing. This is happening already, as we have noted earlier. Indeed, the redirection of American foreign policy at the professional level of the permanent foreign affairs bureaucracy already has been launched. Some of the writings in this special issue on crisis forecasting are particular evidence of the movement. The opening sentence of this article should be considered in the context of the developments already taking place. To repeat, during the next few years, it may be possible to mobilize a global

warning system directed to the detection of every kind of seriously endangering situation.

The new requirement for analysis should hold even greater interest for the academic community than the requirement for information gathering. The experience of the past thirty years in the intelligence agencies should now have impressed everyone with the need for keeping a balance between information acquisition and information analysis. Unless the skills and resources devoted to analysis are as great as those assigned to obtaining information, the latter goes to waste in proportion. Theory (or, when the problem has been reduced to routine, doctrine) is the key to the selection procedures in analysis. If the analysis requirement is to digest the information flow in the interests of crisis avoidance and crisis prevention, then benefits flow from the development of theory about crisis anticipation. Guiding concepts for the anticipation of crisis are few and far between, however. The knowledge from the past instances of "classical" crises of international history, some hints from disaster literature, and useful suggestions found in threat and stress studies about constitute the existing theory inventory.

The policy community might be helped just now if the academic community undertook fresh work on theories of

crisis anticipation. Problem-solving questions give some hints on what kinds of concepts and constructs would relate effectively to analysis tasks. For example, it can be asked, what principles of selection could be brought to bear if one were inspecting every day a large incoming flow of messages and reports about conditions abroad and had the duty of bringing to attention at the earliest moment the particular dangers and troubles that promised to develop into the inflamed condition of crisis? Theory directions are suggested to some extent by such questions.

#### A THEORY OPTION

More explicit guidelines for the direction of data acquisition and data analysis related to foreseeing crises and to preventing a return to Cold War conditions can be provided from theorizing about the future of international relations. In some respects we are turning the clock back to 1947 and to the debate of that time on the issue of political realism versus political idealism. There are two strong and distinct conceptions current of what the major transformation of the international system is leading toward. An observer can exercise a theory option: (1) take up the advanced position represented by "transnationalism," (2) take up the conservative posture focused on an "international political primacy" orientation, or (3) choose

"eclecticism," or the position that both conceptualizations will be influential and that the future will see a mixing of their effects. Information and analysis requirements will vary according to which projection of the future international system is adopted. The two conceptualizations will be followed here in outline and only sufficiently to indicate their impact on information and analysis requirements, and, therefore, on indicated directions of future research.

The "transnational" theory has old roots. Sharp and Kirk (1944: 102) used the term in a chapter title in their basic international relations textbook first published in 1940. The transition decade after 1964 saw the main growth of the current conceptualization, however. The fundamental transnational observation is that the European state system, spread worldwide since the 19th century, is obsolete and approaching its demise. The operating unit of the system, the nation state, has become incapable of performing the functions that give it an excuse for being. The state no longer can provide defense against the destruction of property and lives in the face of modern military technology and organization. The national unit is equally inadequate and maladapted in terms of economics and non-military technological advances. In fact, the nation state is seen as the main barrier to the achievement of global peace and

prosperity. It has become atavistic; world community values and practices have spread and already have "penetrated" the national structures. The support of the legitimacy of the nation is being withdrawn progressively by individual action and by popular discrediting moods and movements. National government loses control over national society and the latter becomes increasingly ungovernable. Worldwide social and economic interdependence is held to be a fact of life. Mutual vulnerability of nations and the conditional viability of regimes promise to put an end to the five hundred year old reign of the nation state system.

International organizations and new transnational arrangements will take the place of the old system. Revolutionary political action is not required. As transnational awareness dawns, intelligent adaptation will guide the shift of policy and organization from the national to the transnational basis. Only outmoded political mythology continues to guard the traditional distinction between domestic, nation-centered affairs and foreign affairs. Many people, particularly among the young, have been attracted greatly to the transnational interpretation. The meaning of the current transformation of the international system is read simply as a main step toward transnationalism and the achievement of world community.

Under the transnational perspective, the information and analysis requirements discussed earlier are likely to be understood primarily in terms of the worldwatch functions of international organizations. The world population research movement probably is the model of this kind of worldwatch activity. Should United States foreign policy in the future become an instrument of support for such transnational programs, data collection and analysis resources would be likely to be focused on just those places and situations in the world where deprivations, inequalities, and injustices are prevailing and where, in addition, transnational programs have been mounted for the purpose of correcting these conditions. Forecasting crises would become mostly a matter of evaluating where transnational problem-solving efforts were failing to control adverse situations "in the field." Crisis prevention rather than mere crisis avoidance probably would become the favored policy objective. The occurrence of a crisis would be seen from the transnational point of view as an emergency situation, such as the outbreak of famine, that would require unusual relief measures. Crises would lose most of the political coloration of the "classical" cases; they would be political mainly in the process of enlisting cooperative efforts from governmental or post-national entities. No more Cold War type of entrenched confrontations of Powers would create

worry simply because the international system would have yielded to a transnational or world community system.

Beyond acknowledging the existence and the considerable strength of the intellectual current identified with transnationalism, I do not want to pursue further the topic of crisis control and prevention from the transactional standpoint. The reason is that I do not consider the main line of historical development to be moving far in the transnational direction for some generations to come. In my view, we are going to be required to live for a long time yet without the world community. The system of sovereign states is a kind of sink into which affairs gravitate. The national units are likely to persist if for no other reason than that suitable replacements have not materialized.

The observer whose outlook tends toward the "political realist" side will be likely to emphasize trends of the recent past that run counter to the transnationalist expectations. The forecast for the next few decades extends in the opposite direction from the world community and emphasizes a continuation and probably an increase in the "liberation" struggles for nation independence. The fractioning of political entities that has produced several score new members of the United Nations in twenty years is not over. Nations are not disappearing; they are



multiplying. Where the Cold War produced for awhile the frightening spectacle of a simple world order of two huge armed camps, poised in conflict on the edge of catastrophe, the new era presents the prospects of dozens of intensely political conflicts and contests, not closely interrelated, but alike, nevertheless in their preoccupation with who will control the machinery of government of national and sub-national units. The emerging situations of the future that will threaten the international system will be numbers of communal struggles within nation-state boundaries for local power and autonomy (civil strife in Northern Ireland being a current example), numbers of forceful overthrows of regimes (the recent Portuguese revolution represents this class of occurrences), numbers of local or regional confrontations that entrain several neighboring countries in political/military complications (for example, the present communal clash and civil war in Lebanon) and numbers of overload and breakdown occurrences where nation units cannot meet essential needs and cannot support essential services (i.e., Bangladesh, the Sahel famine countries). In all of these potential circumstances of future international crises, the political factor is seen to hold the dominating position with respect to both problem-solving and control and the nation-state, and not some transnational replacement, is regarded as the available unit of

organization. "International political primacy" means simply that the growth of interdependence and mutual vulnerability in the world will bring all these varieties of local disasters to global attention in a political action format and, thus, will generate demands for solutions from political units.

The new reading of the meaning of political realism includes the established "primacy" concept (everything in public affairs comes back eventually to a political focus\* and the following observations:

1. The current international transformation phenomena that take in such diverse developments as the reshuffling of the international status ordering, energy and resource shortages and displacements, the rise to power of global business enterprises, the concerted campaigns of Third World countries for recognition and greater shares of modernization benefits, the heavy arming of a score of "lesser" Powers, and the civil disobedience moods and agitations in the advanced societies promise a restructuring of international relations but not their demise or replacement. We can expect a new "international agenda" but not a new system.

2. The distinction made between the internal and external affairs of nations remains a vital and central

aspect of public affairs, present and future. It is not true, as the transactionalists insist, that domestic and foreign affairs now are completely intermingled and, therefore indistinguishable, one from the other.

3. The principle that holds that nations are responsible for their own survival and welfare remains in place. Nation-states have no alternative but to look after their interests and to provide the means to resist encroachments, interventions, and penetrations by other nation-states.

4. The growth of interdependence and the increase in mutual vulnerability in the international system are not always inducements to cooperative behavior. In fact, these conditions and a growing volume of international activity simply create more exposures per unit of time to the risk of conflict and disagreement. The future can be expected to generate at least as many dangerous situations and as much threat as the past.

5. The world does not yet possess the control capabilities to forestall conflict, prevent natural catastrophes, or to correct the follies, the shortcomings, or the tyrannies of domestic national regimes. Because of this incapacity, public dangers will continue to arise, disasters and threats of disaster will continue to be

encountered, and emergency situations and acute crises will continue to be experienced. Many of the troubles in the world will have to be worked out by those that suffer most from them. The superpowers should be the principal defenders of the principle of non-intervention since both have had dismal experiences with intervention policies in the transition decade of 1966-75.

6. Crisis prevention, while praiseworthy as an ideal goal, is not seen as a promising policy choice even for a leading Power. Crisis avoidance, on the other hand, assumes that the conditions that produce the frictions and tensions and that ignite violence often are not controllable but it does assume that dampening and limiting influences can be employed to hold off their magnification to crisis levels. The intention to work against the expansion of conflict conditions to crisis levels and the determination to acquire anti-crisis knowledge and skills are reasonable and worthy foreign policy choices. Crisis avoidance, in turn, hinges on successful crisis anticipation.

7. The political primacy concept is well known: it is simply the principle that all significant public problems, issues, and troubles, whatever their first character, become converted into political concerns. Three degrees of threat severity should govern the attention and reaction directed

to dangers in the international environment at large: (a) political upheavals contained entirely within a single national community should be rated with the lowest warning priority, (b) tension, strife, conflict, and violence contained within the bounds of relations of a pair of political entities should have the next highest warning priority, and (c) political embroilments that draw additional numbers of governments into the strife of two national antagonists should have the highest warning priority and be given the greatest attention with respect to crisis avoidance.

The clash of views between the believers in the transnational future and the believers in the political primacy future probably cannot be averted. The issue is fundamental in that it reflects a national approach versus a world community approach to future security and welfare. It could be argued on logical grounds (and also on ideological grounds, it is to be noted) that U.S. foreign policy should take up one position and expel the other in order to avoid the weakness and confusion that would result from trying to embrace both orientations. There is a third position often taken in matters of this kind that endorses a pluralistic orientation. It assumes that public policy is seldom strictly logical and almost never ideologically pure.

Under the third perspective, the forecast is made that in the next few decades U.S. foreign and defense policies will advance transnationalist undertakings in some matters and at some times and nationalist, self-protection activities in other cases and on other occasions. Alternations may occur; transnationalism may rise to the fore when the national mood is optimistic and change-embracing and fall into the background when national feelings are running in pessimistic and defensive directions. In other words, mixed patterns of adaptation may make an appearance and move across adaptation modes such as those Rosenau (1970) has described. Academic research and applied policy analysis can be expected to develop under both basic theoretical perspectives on the future of world affairs. This is a safe estimate to offer; the dual development already is in evidence.

#### RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Partly because the techniques for doing it have improved greatly, partly because the perception of growing future threats has sharpened, and partly because the transnational problem-solving orientation requires it, worldwatching has turned into a major research activity. Private organizations, specialized international organizations, and national governments all are engaged in

making world surveys for specified problems and conditions. Further these studies are being put on a continuing basis so that updates and new analyses are produced periodically. More and more effort is going into such data mobilization projects and into periodic analyses and forecasts.

World population trends, world weather, world food and agriculture, world trade, world investments, world health and disease detection, world environmental trends and pollution effects, world energy production and consumption, world mineral access, world scientific exchange, world crime and delinquency, world travel and communication, and world international conferencing are but a few of the special objects of attention in current worldwatching and serial reporting. In addition to the worldwatching in parts, private groups, international organizations, and national governments increasingly are sponsoring the research of synthesis and are producing estimates of the global condition--"state of the world" reporting (Union of International Associations/Mankind 2000, 1976). All of this work can be characterized as "charting" or the tracing of changes in conditions, situations, and events with the passage of time. Charting results from systematic monitoring activity and usually takes the form of statistical or indicator reporting.

The transnational stimulus has produced not only the worldwatch movement but also early innovative attempts at world system modelling. The Forrester models, and the "limits to growth" computer simulations are the best known of the modelling projects (Meadows et.al., 1972). Other modelling structures have since been constructed and many more can be expected to develop in the near future.

Both charting and modelling are methods that can facilitate forecasting. To date, the worldwatch movement has been under the prime influence of transnationalism and, therefore, it has developed data resources for conditions that are expected to be attacked directly through rational problem-solving. The engineer's orientation has dominated both charting and modelling. Technical solutions are sought; political factors are discounted as "externalities" or they are approached as barriers to be removed. Missing from the worldwatch studies is the element of greatest concern from the political primacy standpoint of crisis forecasting for the purposes of crisis avoidance through political measures. At the first level of analysis of crisis studies, the question of note is, what will the political and military reactions likely be if trends toward disaster in future conditions develop and transnational technical problem-solving fails? What can be discovered through charting and modelling for crisis that will give clues to



the means for the control or alleviation of coming large scale system disorders and disasters? Crisis anticipation studies that are shaped by questions such as the foregoing have not yet developed very far. What may be named "conditions charting" and "conditions modelling" are areas of research that are open for development. They are attractive possibilities since the rich data of worldwatching can be re-employed under the political primacy orientation.

Situations analysis may well prove to be the most fruitful research avenue to crisis forecasting and crisis avoidance. Situations are distinguished from conditions by the consideration that situations include the data of interactive behavior and the parties to action and response. A climate change--a cooling of a degree or two, for example--that reduced food production and that led to shortages and civic turmoil would be a key factor in a problem for conditions analysis. Projections of data indicating when and where a disaster could occur or computer models that allowed input variations to work through the system relations and manifest themselves in a civic turmoil output would be products of "conditions" research. Studying the vulnerabilities of ten Southern African national regimes and identifying their threat sensitivities and hence their crisis-proneness in order to understand what could propel

them into violent reactions would be a case for situations analysis.

"Situations" are conceived to be contingent on what individuals and groups of people think and do. They are "states of affairs" with some fairly stable patterning and some endurance across time but without permanence. Situations drift slowly on to, across, and out of the viewing screen of history. The "problem" of the dictatorships in the 1930's was a "situation." So too is the brewing confrontation of the Southern African countries. A more abstract example of a topic for situations analysis could be "the dynamics of communal struggle" where modelling in terms of control theory might be undertaken to cover cases including such as Northern Ireland, Lebanon, and Rhodesia and where charting would permit comparative analysis of the shifting relations of conflict on several of the conflict sites. Another illustration of an approach to "situations analysis" is the familiar threat evaluation routines of the Cold War era where the assumption was almost always made that the current relative military status was the best predictor of what an opponent was likely to do.

A world survey that periodically reviews both the domestic and foreign sources of tension, apprehension, and perceived danger for each country has been carried through a

prototype development stage. Work is needed on the images of crisis and the perceptions of threat and danger held by other peoples and governments. The goal should be to construct such knowledge for all countries in current terms. Studies of how the security, welfare, or prospects of gain and loss are likely to be experienced by various countries if certain changes take place in the international environment can be advanced by both charting and modelling. The decision outcomes of the Law of the Sea conferences or the effects produced on each country by the 200 mile limit for the exploitation of marine resources would be another example of an approach to situations analysis and to the anticipation of how future crises could arise. The development of knowledge of the status of nation to nation commitments, formal and informal and military and otherwise, is still another situational analysis task very relevant to crisis forecasting and crisis avoidance. The spread of crisis conditions from local conflicts to general ones is likely to follow along the routes of commitment. A last instance of a research venture of the situational type is a demonstration project that shows the methods for making a daily world survey of the changing net "burden" of threat and tension conditions and for developing a running record of indicator information that traces the advance and retreat of conditions with crisis potential.

A third main area into which crisis anticipation research is known to be moving is events analysis. International event studies have had an active growth for a decade; many projects have been directed specifically to crisis behavior. Some proficiency was developed in recognizing the patterns and the regular features of the Cold War series of crises. The event approach, which most often has been turned to charting rather than modelling, now needs to be retested and adapted to fit the new emergency situations concept of crisis. One outstanding advantage of event analysis is that short term forecasts made frequently have been shown to be feasible. Weekly or even twice-weekly calculations of trends and patterns of international behavior and their projection for a period immediately ahead are no longer difficult to do. As writing elsewhere in this issue demonstrates, event research plays a part in several anti-crisis early warning systems under current development.

Schemes that locate things that are inherently complex and only partly understood in neat boxes are both annoying and invariably incorrect. Toleration by the reader is solicited, therefore, in the schematization of current prospects of crisis research in a 2 x 3 table that places "Charting" and "Modelling" as row names and that specifies "Conditions," "Situations," and "Events" for the column

titles. Nevertheless, there seems to be something very useful in recognizing that new crisis studies can be understood as falling in six boxes with many overlaps and some unfitted instances. The systematic evaluation of threats and the disciplined estimation of the probabilities of crisis occurrences can be conceived as occupying three levels approachable through two main means of study.

Current intelligence analyses in the policy community and event monitoring and indexing from the flow of the news by the academic community are at the immediate warning level of crisis research. Event readings provide the greatest detail of behavioral information, have the least repetitive patterning, and are the most important kind of charting from a day to day operations standpoint. Events-level modelling is likely to run strongly to technical and tactical problems such as how best to provide speed, verification, or redundancy in message transmissions or how best to provide mobile, on-site sensors in emergency locations. This statement should not be interpreted, however, to be an exclusion of other event modelling possibilities. The case simply is that event modelling efforts to date have inclined either to such "practical problems" or to categorizing exercises that hold little theoretical interest.

The second chance at catching conflict and catastrophe

trends before they spawn crises is at the "situations" level of analysis. Both charting and modelling have excellent prospects at the situations level. Both are likely to flourish best in computer-enviored research enterprises; both are of interest from the standpoint of basic inquiry in international behavior research and in policy strategy and planning studies.

Normative theory formulations, neglected since the advent of "behavioral" international studies, have a chance to make a comeback through situations model construction. An irresistible example has come to notice in the world news at the time of this writing. The Zimbabwe Liberation Army or ZLA has surfaced and is reported to be operating from safe havens in Mozambique in guerrilla activities against Rhodesian forces. For modelling purposes, it may not be critical which "side" is taken: i.e., what the best plan would be for the ZLA to follow to gain a victory or what the best Rhodesian moves would be to beat the ZLA. After Vietnam, we expect a great deal of lore and post mortem wisdom are available on what one can do about guerrilla sanctuaries when they are viewed as a type-problem. A computer model of the situation, generalized to a type, should not be exceptionally difficult to construct. Many input forms and quantities could be tried on such a model to locate promising initiatives and reactions according to how

the objectives are set. Situational charting, as was suggested earlier, is a superior technique for keeping accounts on the historical unfolding of affairs. Models may be built in the expectation that their projections will be checked later on "when history has happened" against specific charting records kept through the encompassing time period.

The third and most distant of the levels, seen from the standpoint of disaster warnings and crisis prevision is that of "conditions." Sharing of data and problem identifications with the transnationalists will occur; the analytic perspective will be different for crisis anticipation inquiries, however, as the previous discussion has indicated.

In this article, an attempt has been made to compress into a small space a discussion of a large topic. That topic is a reading of the effects rising from the reconfiguration of the structure and process of international politics with special reference to the crisis concept. Compact communication efforts usually cause misinterpretations; where I have been clear enough to be understood, I expect to have aroused some disagreements. Misunderstood or disagreed with, I am concerned to set forth three last observations that relate to theory and research prospects and that can

stand alone outside the context of the preceding remarks:

1. After a lull of half dozen years, crisis studies have taken a new lease on life. They are attracting scholarly attentions and are being pursued in new ways by both scholars and government analysts. Whatever the motivating force is, we are into a fresh round of crisis theory and research activity.

2. The younger, the more vigorous, and the more talented minds that lately have turned to the crisis topic are leaning too much, in my view developed after some direct contact and experience with them, toward technicalized approaches and unduly narrow orientations. A main reason for stressing the transformation of the international system theme and the evolving role of crisis phenomena is to point out to the young, the vigorous, and the talented that their subject has a larger compass and much more historical significance and impact that they have tended to conceive. Formal theory does provide excellent discipline and it once was in need of favoring for the corrective effect it could introduce on international relations conceptualizing. We have come to a time when some curbing is necessary. A counterbalancing can be attained, perhaps, through attention to historical theorizing.

3. There are abundant and growing signs that the



American academic community and the U.S. policy community may be about ready to give up the traditional habits of mutual deprecation. Particularly if the classified information barrier can be lowered further to a minimum necessity level, a substantial number of collaborative arrangements between international relations scholars and government researchers and analysts now can be advanced. Crisis studies in the new mode furnish an example of an enterprise both sides approve and respect. There could be a reversal of the trend toward the search for activities in international relations theory and research of advantage in both communities, of course, but the prospect at the time of this writing is for improved collaboration on a basis not experienced before in the long generation since the end of World War II.

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